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LETTER DATED 7 OCTOBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FINLAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement issued on 6 October 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union on the presidential election and referendum in Abkhazia (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Marjatta RASI
Permanent Representative of Finland
to the United Nations

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the presidential election and referendum in Abkhazia issued on 6 October 1999 by the Presidency of the European Union

The European Union regrets that the authorities in Abkhazia, Georgia, held so-called presidential elections on 3 October together with a referendum on the Constitution of Abkhazia. The elections were described as unacceptable and illegitimate by the Security Council in its resolution 1255 (1999) of 30 July 1999. The European Union considers the elections and the referendum null and void and the holding of them detrimental to the efforts to find a peaceful solution to the conflict within the Geneva process.

Simultaneously, the European Union wants to reiterate the necessity of finding a definitive and just solution to the Abkhazian problem through political negotiation. The solution should show respect for the territorial integrity of Georgia and the necessity of granting maximum autonomy for Abkhazia, which would permit the Abkhazians to express their identity within Georgia.

It must be underlined that it is equally essential to ensure a safe return for the refugees.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus and Malta and the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein members of the European Economic Area align themselves with the present statement.